The Murder Weapon

A federal judge in Dallas has ruled that the rifle used by Lee Oswald to assassinate President Kennedy is the property of the government, not an auctionable conversation piece. The decision came when a Denver oil man contended he had paid Oswald's widow $10,000 for the $12.88 Mannlicher-Carcano rifle. Judge Joe Estes ruled the transaction invalid, holding that the weapon came under a federal law making "all evidence about the assassination" government property.

This is a proper decision. The Oswald rifle, obtained under a false name in the first place, figured in a tragedy affecting the entire nation. As such, it shouldn't be allowed to enter the private collection of any citizen able to bid for it.

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